

## **your heart is a candle ( i won't let you blow it out ) by OffFandomTrash**

**Category:** Stranger Things - Fandom

**Genre:** F/M, Hurt/Comfort, It's depressing, Plot Twist, and my first work, but i get worse the more you get to know me, but this is my first impression, but you get used to it, expect the unexpected, i am the unexpected, i'm not evil, so happy ending is likely, welcome to my account, yeah yeah i'll give you a happy ending, yet - Freeform

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Mike Wheeler

**Relationships:** Eleven | Jane Hopper & Jim "Chief" Hopper, Eleven | Jane Hopper & Mike Wheeler, Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler

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**Summary:**

"El, can't you hear me?" he asks, his face inches away from her calloused palms. She could hear him, yet ironically, she knew he could not hear her; could not see her. She could not touch him— for he'd disappear like a cloud of smoke.. like a second thought.

Her thumb ghosts over his cheeks, eyes pleading and begging for something he couldn't pinpoint.

And it hurt her.. knowing that she had this power over him— that she could be his cure, his addiction. That she could be his destruction- his poison..

And suddenly, she felt like a monster- this horrible creature that could make him of all of the good things in the world.. and break him with just her words.

And she could see it in his eyes.. she could see the truth— that she was his impending doom.. that she was his everything.

She could see it. And she knew, in that moment, that she could kill him- stab him.. and he would still love her.

— she didn't deserve his devotion.

When he is left without an answer, El can see where the eternal flame behind his eyes gives out.

..And she feels the pain that crosses in his eyes as it shoots directly to her heart.

OR

the one where Eleven hears "I love you" for the first time.

## **your heart is a candle ( i won't let you blow it out )**

### **Author's Note:**

Hello! This is my first work here, so I'm going to come right out and say that my name is Marissa and you'll probably strongly dislike me by the end of this one-shot.. so enjoy me while I'm being a cupcake.

You should probably know that we will likely have a rocky relationship. You'll love me. You'll hate me. You'll love to hate me. You'll hate to love me.

Yeah, yeah.. you know the drill.

But, while you still love me, please do not hesitate to drop a comment and leave feedback! I will take whatever is offered graciously. And, while you are at it, please leave your kudos ( psst.. it's right beside the 'comment' block ) and validate me.

Self-promotion is over. Now, without further ado..

"I'm going into the station, kid, do not forget to heat up your dinner."

Hopper's voice was gruff and thick with a forced sternness that demanded Eleven's attention. Her small torso shifted in her spot atop the sofa, subconsciously threading the quilt tossed over her lap through her slender fingers as she simply blinked expansive, brown optics at the chief. It was a telltale sign that she was listening— a response that was either a good sign or a borderline smartass response depending on the situation. In his defense, it was difficult to decipher when the kid rarely used her words to say she was listening, or to say she was angry with him. He really didn't see a difference. Scrubbing a large palm over his scratchy features, Hopper reaches for his signature sheriff's hat hanging beside the door, lifting it skyward

to place atop his thinning hair.

"And I don't mean Eggos."

He adds, as a second thought, when he reaches the cabin's only entrance and exit point. He waits for the affirmation that she heard and understood what he had said.

"Make dinner. No Eggos."

She recounts, broken phrases falling from parted pink lips as mahogany optics follow Hopper's swift movements as he prepares to leave. Apparently he is satisfied enough with her response (or maybe he really is just running late) because he swings the door open and yells his final reminder of, "Lock the door behind me!" before he disappears outside. She does as told, sealing the locks with the aid of her abilities as she slowly pulls herself to her feet. Hopper's flannel around her torso hangs loosely against her sides, the sleeves extending far past her fingertips as she searches for the blindfold she designated for her trips to visit Mike in the Void.

Slender digits yank the piece of cloth from its hiding place around the bedpost in her bedroom, carrying it over to the television sat in the living area of the cabin. Kneeling, El drops in front of the TV set, switching the channels with the tilt of her head until she finds static. Tying the blindfold over chocolate colored eyes, Eleven places a dainty palm against the screen— searching the dark corners of her mind for Mike.

The sounds of his careful whispers find her, bare feet wadding through the shallow water beneath her feet as she trudges over to Mike where he is sat in the blanket fort inside of his basement. Eleven crouches in front of him, the audible sound of her heart breaking clashing with the sounds of the water moving due to her disturbance.

The tears dripping from his pallid cheeks run with the dark water of the Void— lost in a larger sea of blackness that extended far past what she could see.

/Day 247./

"El, are you there?"

She was. She was there. She could trace the freckles coloring his skin. She could look into his dark eyes— a stark contrast against his pale face. She could hover; pretend to touch him and pretend as if they were with one another. As if he could see the heartbreak written in her eyes. As if he could hear her heartbeat— the heart that beat /for him/— amongst the silence.

Instead, he looked right through her.

"I talked about you today. With Will. He wanted to know what you looked like so that he could draw his real life superhero..like a comic strip. I did the best I could, but I realized that I /don't/ know what you look like. What you look like now, anyway.."

He paused his rant momentarily, a break that was long enough to be considered dramatic until he exhaled all air in his lungs and stilled where he sat, seemingly defeated.

"I miss you."

Eleven didn't have to say it back— it rang clearly through the air inaudibly, slicing through the silence.

"I miss you.. and, and I love you."

He stumbled through his admission, declaring it aloud for his benefit though he refused to believe that she wasn't /there/; that she wasn't listening to him say it somewhere— wherever the hell she was.

Eleven did hear it though. She heard the unfamiliar words on his tongue, depriving her of air until she was drowning, drowning, /sinking./ She felt as though she could have passed out then, without fail, at any given moment because somebody l o v e d her. Somebody who, by definition, shared an intense feeling of affection toward her — who would give and give and /give/ to her without expecting anything in return. Somebody who would kiss her, or hug her, or promise to check the bed for monsters ( very, very real monsters ) every night.. and would do it all without question. Because he loved her.

/Somebody/ when, before, it had been  
n o b o d y.

Tears cling to Eleven's dark lashes— gaze flickering between his eyes and attempting to decipher his expression even though she was the least qualified person to identify human emotions when she was still trying to /learn/ them from a life spent in the lab in which feelings were hard to come across.

Mike's face was painted with dejection— hurt showcasing itself there in ways even El could take notice of as he drops his head to his cupped palms.

Tears pool within her brown eyes, threatening to fall as she reaches a hand out to him and stops directly before she makes contact— afraid of losing him. Afraid of being left alone again, in the dark, like the many nights she spent in the lab.

..Afraid of losing love again. Like with Papa. Like with Mama.

But, above the fear, sadness, anger, or pain..

— Eleven felt loved. And though she certainly didn't have the experience ( and maybe she was still a bit confused ) she decided that she loved, too.

"El, can't you hear me?" he asks, his face inches away from her calloused palms. She could hear him, yet ironically, she knew he could not hear her; could not see her. She could not touch him— for he'd disappear like a cloud of smoke.. like a second thought.

Her thumb ghosts over his cheeks, eyes pleading and begging for something he couldn't pinpoint.

"El, did you hear?.. I love you."

And suddenly, it didn't feel like a good thing anymore. He was hurting, and she was the one causing him /pain./ She and Hopper were still working on developing her social, people, and emotional skills and she knew, somehow, that what she was feeling now was bad. ( She also knew that what he was feeling was worse. )

Eleven didn't know love, for it had never been offered to her and she didn't know how to /feel that way/ when she lived in the lab and all she knew was punishment, telekinesis, and Papa; but she knew what she saw and with his every fallen, forgotten tear and heart-wrenching sob, she knew he was sad. Her absence made him sad. His inability to see her; to hear her, made him sad. The fact that he didn't know if she was okay— if she was alive, made him sad.

/She/ made him sad.

And it hurt her.. knowing that she had this power over him— that she could be his cure, his addiction.. love him like he loved her. That she could be his destruction- his poison.. something that could ruin him— make him cry.

And suddenly, she felt like a monster- this horrible creature that could make him of all of the good things in the world.. and break him with just her words.

And she could see it in his tearful eyes.. she could see the truth— that she was his impending doom.. that she was his everything.

She could see it. And she knew, in that moment, that she could kill him- stab him.. and he would still love her.

— and she didn't deserve his devotion.

A plethora of emotions play at her heartstrings simultaneously— further confusing Eleven for the belief that people were only supposed to feel one thing at a time.

She felt his love— prominent and everything she had ever wanted.

She felt his pain— the pain that crosses in his eyes as it shoots directly to her heart when he does not receive an answer from her.

She felt the anger that came with being /stupid/ and not knowing how to /feel./ She felt the irritation directed at Hopper for not letting her see Mike— for not letting her talk to him and tell him that she loves him, too.. mad because she cannot give and receive love like everybody else.

Ultimately though, she knew whose fault this was.

Because though she may not yet understand human emotions or how they appear and work both individually and together, she does know one thing..

..She knows that he loves her..

( And she knows that she does not deserve it. )

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On Day 353, El says it first, this time, and Mike couldn't believe she'd heard him say it then. Now, he tells her it's the biggest promise he'd ever made to her—to anybody, and he'd keep his promise every damn day..

(And this time— after she closes the gate and Hopper tells her she did good and Mike is proud of her— she does deserve it. )